

IN THE CLAIMS

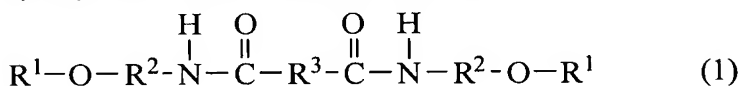
Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A hair cosmetic composition comprising the following components (A) and (B):

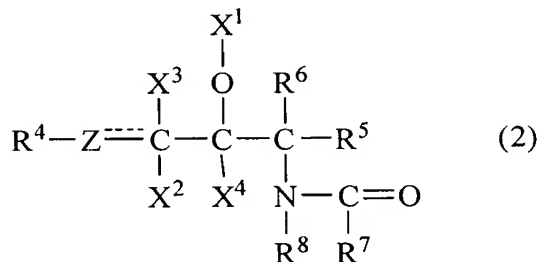
(A): from 0.001 to 10 wt.% of an amphipathic amide lipid, and

(B): from 0.05 to 10 wt.% of at least one compound selected from the group consisting of an ethylene glycol monofatty acid ester or ethylene glycol difatty acid ester containing, in the fatty acid composition thereof, from 65 to 90 wt. % of stearic acid and mixtures thereof ~~dialkyl ethers with alkyl groups having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, ethylene glycol dialkyl ethers with alkyl groups having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, ethylene glycol monofatty acid esters with an acyl group having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, ethylene glycol difatty acid esters with acyl groups having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, fatty acid monoethanolamides with an acyl group having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, and acylated β -alanines with an acyl group having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms, and mixtures thereof~~ wherein a ratio of components (A):(B) ranges from ~~5:1 to 1:1000~~ 1:1 to 1:30.

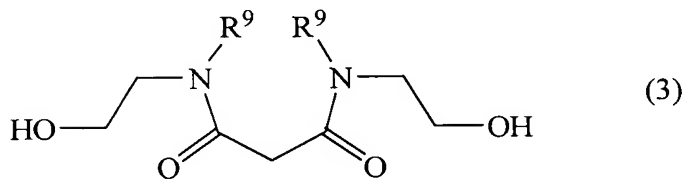
2. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, wherein component (A) is selected from the group consisting of amphipathic amide lipids represented by any one of the following formulas (1) to (4) and mixtures thereof:



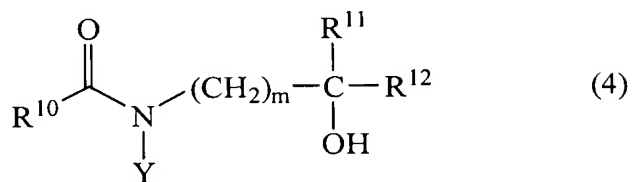
wherein, R^1 represents a linear or branched C_{1-12} hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s) and/or alkoxy group(s), R^2 represents a linear or branched divalent C_{1-5} hydrocarbon group, and R^3 represents a linear or branched divalent C_{1-22} hydrocarbon group,



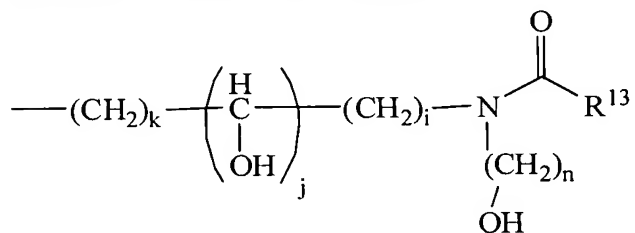
wherein, R^4 represents a linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated C_{4-30} hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with hydroxyl, oxo or amino group(s), Z represents a methylene group, a methine group or an oxygen atom, a broken line means the presence or absence of a π bond, X^1 represents a hydrogen atom, an acetyl group or a glyceryl group, or, together with the adjacent oxygen atom, forms an oxo group, X^2 , X^3 and X^4 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxy group or an acetoxy group (with the proviso that when Z represents a methine group, one of X^2 and X^3 represents a hydrogen atom and the other does not exist, and when $-\text{O}-\text{X}^1$ represents an oxo group, X^4 does not exist), R^5 and R^6 each independently represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxy group, a hydroxymethyl group or an acetoxymethyl group, R^7 represents a linear, branched or cyclic, and saturated C_{5-35} hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with a hydroxyl or amino group, or the saturated C_{5-35} hydrocarbon group in which a linear, branched or cyclic, saturated or unsaturated C_{8-22} fatty acid which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s), is ester-bonded at the ω -position of the hydrocarbon group, and R^8 represents a hydrogen atom or a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated hydrocarbon group which may have substituent(s) selected from a hydroxy group, hydroxyalkoxy groups, alkoxy groups and an acetoxy group, and has from 1 to 8 carbon atoms in total,



wherein, R^9 represents a C_{10-18} alkyl group which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s),



wherein, R¹⁰ represents a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₉₋₃₁ hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s), or a 2-dodecen-1-yl succinic acid residue, m stands for an integer of from 1 to 3, R¹¹ and R¹² each represents a hydrogen atom or a C₁₋₄ alkyl or hydroxyalkyl group, Y represents a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₁₀₋₃₂ hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s), or a substituent represented by the following formula:



in which, k, i and n each stands for an integer of from 1 to 3, j stands for 0 or 1, and R¹³ represents a linear or branched, saturated or unsaturated C₉₋₃₁ hydrocarbon group which may be substituted with hydroxy group(s).

3. (original) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 2, wherein component (A) is selected from the group consisting of amphipathic amide lipids represented by either of the formulas (1) and (2), and mixtures thereof.

4. (canceled)

5. (original) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, wherein component (B) is distearyl ether.

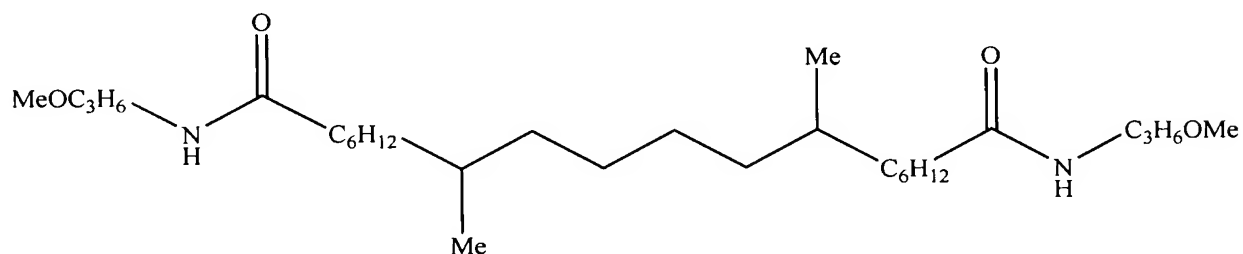
6. (original) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, further comprising a cationic polymer.

7. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 6, wherein the cationic polymer is selected from the group consisting of cationic cellulose and cationic guar gum.

8. (original) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, having a pH of from 1 to 5 at 25°C when diluted to 20 times its weight with water.

9. (withdrawn) A hair protecting method, which comprises the steps of applying a hair cosmetic composition as claimed in Claim 1 to hair and then washing away the composition.

10. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, wherein component (A) is an amphipathic amide lipid is of the formula



and component (B) is an ethylene glycol difatty acid ester having acyl groups having from 18 to 22 carbon atoms.

11 (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 10 wherein component (B) is ethylene glycol distearate.

12. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, wherein component (A) is present in an amount of 0.5 to 1 wt. %.

13. (canceled)

14. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, wherein component (A) is present in an amount of 0.5 to 1 wt. %.

15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of claim 1, wherein a ratio of components (A):(B) ranges from 1:3 to 1:6.

17. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 1, further comprising a surfactant in an amount of 1 to 30 wt. %.

18. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 6, wherein said cationic polymer is present in an amount of 0.02 to 5 wt. %.

19. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 6, wherein component (A) and said cationic polymer are present in a ratio of 50:1 to 1:100.

20. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of Claim 6, wherein component (A) and said cationic polymer are present in a ratio of 3:1 to 1:2.

21. (previously presented) The hair cosmetic composition of claim 1, wherein a ratio of components (A):(B) ranges from 1:1 to 1:20.